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# Advocate of Peace.

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## The May Meetings.

Is the month of May to be known hereafter as the Month of Peace? The question has been suggested by the large number of events relating to the peace movement which have taken place during the month just past.

Foremost among these events should, of course, be placed the observance of the Eighteenth of May in the educational institutions of the country. For this observance means not a single event, not a single program of exercises in a single school, but a great group of events—tens of thousands of them—extending to nearly all parts of the land. From the imperfect reports that have come to us we are able with assurance to state that never before in the history of the peace movement have so many people, young and old, had their attention called to the subject in a single day as on the 18th of last month. The day, or some day near to it, was observed with suitable exercises in practically all the great cities of the nation,—New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Buffalo, Cleveland, Minneapolis, St. Louis, Chicago, San Francisco, New Orleans, Honolulu, etc., and in large

numbers of the smaller cities and towns. In many of the cities the superintendents and teachers entered into the observance with genuine enthusiasm, and the pupils responded with great interest. We have heard also of cities where nearly all the ministers preached sermons on peace on the Sunday preceding.

Then, again, Memorial Day was in an unusually large number of places made the occasion by ministers of sermons in condemnation of war. The editor of one of the great monthly magazines writes us: "I have never known so much plain speaking from the pulpit on Memorial Day." The day is coming more and more to be the occasion of recalling, not simply the deeds of courage and self-sacrifice of the men who died in the great struggle, but the horrors of war, its brutality and irrationality, the pity of the fact that men of reason and goodness of heart should not long ago have made such a frightful tragedy as that of the sixties impossible. The conviction is to-day taking hold of men, ministers and others, as never before, that war is no longer tolerable, that it is not inevitable in any case, if good men will only do their duty.

The specific peace meetings and Conferences in May this year were numerous and impressive. There was the great National Congress at Chicago, a full report of which appears in this paper. Then came the eighty-first annual meeting of the American Peace Society, with its special evidences of unusual growth and power of the movement in recent years. Following this was the fifteenth Mohonk Arbitration Conference, a great revelation of the enormous advance in numbers, clearness of vision and courageousness of the peace party. Add to these the annual meeting of the New York Peace Society just before May opened, the second annual meeting of the Utah State Peace Society, the organization of the State of Washington Peace Society at Seattle, the annual meeting of the Peace Society of Connecticut at Hartford, the organization, at a remarkable meeting described elsewhere, of the Buffalo Peace Society, and many other meetings in different sections of the country, and we have an exhibition of the expansion and unfolding of the movement for world-peace such as would have immensely pleased the souls of the peace founders—Dodge, Worcester, Ladd, Burritt, Jay—if they had only lived to see our day.

Great armies? Yes. Gigantic and growing navies? Certainly. Army and navy budgets of incredible magnitude? Nobody disputes it. Rivalry, suspicion, fear,

alarms of war? Unquestionably. But the spirit of May is abroad in the world as never before. It is pervading all the woods and fields and deserts and lakes and seas of humanity. It is flooding the world of men and nations with light and life and hope. And before this May-time spirit of light and love, of reason and spiritual expansion, all the obstacles to good understanding and peace will go down. The nations will dwell together in unity. The high summer of the world is not far away.

### The Chicago National Peace Congress.

The Peace Congresses are the time-keepers of the peace movement. It might not be far wrong to quote President McKinley's phrase and say "the time-keepers of civilization." A dozen years ago one would have been considered visionary if not decidedly "off his balance" if he had ventured the prophecy that within a decade the greatest and most noteworthy congresses anywhere held would be the congresses of the friends of peace, both national and international. But such is now the fact. The Boston International Congress of 1904, opened with a great speech by Secretary Hay; the New York National Congress of 1907, presided over by Mr. Carnegie; the Pennsylvania State Peace Congress of 1908; and now the second National Peace Congress just held in Chicago,—what more remarkable and impressive meetings of any kind have been held in this country in recent years? It is hard to realize the change from the day when the Peace Congresses were attended by only one or two hundred persons to the present when their sessions are attended by audiences that crowd to their utmost capacity the biggest halls which the great cities afford.

The Chicago Congress, of which we give an extended report in this issue, has proved to be a noteworthy successor of the three great Congresses held in the East. It was great in numbers—not so great, to be sure, in average attendance at the meetings as the New York Congress, though some of the sessions brought together as great audiences as we have ever seen at a peace convention. It was great in the character and variety of the speeches, which were abler on the average than those of the Congresses of Boston, New York or Philadelphia, though having no single address equal to those of John Hay or William J. Bryan. The high character of the speeches from the beginning to the end of the Congress was particularly noteworthy.

The Congress did not call forth the popular local support that manifested itself at New York, Boston and Philadelphia. This was due in large part, we think, to the fact that comparatively little local peace work had previously been done in the city, the few strong friends of

the cause living in Chicago having been too busy with their own engagements to carry on an active propaganda.

One of the chief features of the Congress was the way in which it was supported by the Association of Commerce in its organized capacity. This is the first time, we believe, that a great city's Chamber of Commerce has undertaken in any large measure to finance a Peace Congress. But for its generous contribution and the personal subscriptions of individual members the Congress would seemingly have been impossible.

The total number of delegates who registered, some six hundred, was not as great as had been hoped. The Eastern States, though they had been urged to coöperate, sent surprisingly few representatives, and the citizens of Chicago, thinking the Congress to be wholly a delegate one, failed to register in any large number. The delegations from the States of the Middle West, from which Chicago could be easily reached, were large and strong, and in no former Congress have the South and Southwest been so well represented. Thus was revealed the encouraging fact that the desire for world peace has penetrated the public mind in all parts of the nation more widely and deeply than many suppose, and that this sentiment is ready to manifest itself wherever it is given a suitable opportunity to do so.

The Congress has laid the foundations, we feel certain, for a large and powerful work for world peace in the metropolis of the Middle West. A few Chicago men and women of high social and business standing have been led by it to see the tremendous import of the peace movement to all classes and conditions of men, and under their leadership it is expected that large numbers of the rank and file of the citizens of Chicago will be led to give their sincere and active support to the cause. A strong local committee has been created to study the question of the best form in which organization for peace work in Chicago may be effected, and this committee is now engaged in the thorough study of the subject and will soon be able to give its decision.

The resolutions adopted at the close of the Congress were, as will be seen by examining them, strong and unequivocal. They urged the importance of the early completion of the measures for the organization of world peace left uncompleted by the second Hague Conference; they emphasized the imperative necessity of finding a speedy solution of the problem of limitation of armaments as the most urgent international question of the day; they called upon the government of the United States to take the lead as far as practicable in an effort to secure by joint action of the nations the completion of those great unfinished tasks on whose complete solution such vast human interests of the present and the future depend.